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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 720-4330
Letter No. 2529

Oct. 25, 1991

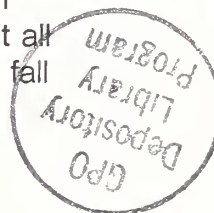
PHONE NUMBERS CHANGE -- Nearly all the phone numbers at USDA headquarters will change prefixes Monday, Oct. 28. The old 447- will be replaced by 720-. USDA Radio-TV's number will become **(202) 720-4330**. USDA Radio's Newsline will **not** change; it will continue as **(202) 488-8358/59**. Our fax number will remain **(202) 245-5165**. USDA's **AgNewsFAX** number will change to **(202) 690-3944**.

WILDFLOWERS IN BLOOM -- The wildflower business may bloom as never before in coming years. Federal legislation adopted in 1987 requires that 25 cents of every \$100 in federal highway landscaping funds be used to plant wildflowers. With few exceptions, wildflowers are now part of any landscaping project on the federal-aid highway system. The National Wildflower Research Center in Austin, Texas, is the heart of research & information about U.S. wildflowers. USDA's Office of Small-Scale Agriculture, headed by **Bud Kerr**, has more information on assessing the market for wildflowers. **Contact: Bud Kerr** (202) 401-4640.

DAIRY BOARD NOMINATIONS -- Secretary of Agriculture **Edward Madigan** has asked dairy producers & farm organizations certified by USDA to nominate candidates to succeed 123 members of the National Dairy Promotion & Research Board whose terms will expire April 30. Madigan will select 12 for the three-year appointments. Nominations are due by Nov. 29. **Contact: Alicia Ford** (202) 447-8998.

MAJOR RESEARCH BREAKTHROUGH WITH HIGH-TECH TOMATOES -- In a major research breakthrough, experimental tomatoes have been genetically engineered to stay on the vine & keep growing, but not ripen or age. The test tomatoes don't produce ethylene, a gas which causes ripening & eventual spoilage in regular tomatoes. "This is a major breakthrough that will revolutionize the production, processing & marketing of fresh fruits, vegetables and cut flowers," says **R. Dean Plowman**, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Research Service. "Millions of dollars will be saved from refrigeration costs and spoilage losses as a result of this technology." **Contact: Athanasios Theologis** (510) 559-5900.

CONSUMER HELP -- There's an information center in Pueblo, Colo., that will steer you in the right direction to buy a car or a house, start a diet or start a budget. And you can get all this information by writing or calling for the **free** Consumer Information Catalog. The new fall edition is ready for you. You can get one by writing to Consumer Information Catalog, Pueblo, Colo., 81009 or phoning (719) 948-4000, 24-hours a day.



AGING PLAYS TRICKS ON BODY -- At least one out of five senior citizens may need to take extra vitamin B12 to prevent senility & other neurological disorders because the B12 in their food is poorly absorbed. Recent studies at USDA's Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts, Boston, Mass., also found senior citizens should get, from their diets, the calcium they need to maintain bones & nerve function, because that mineral is not well absorbed from a commonly used supplemental form -- calcium carbonate. **Contact: Robert M. Russell** (617) 556-3335.

CATFISH PROCESSING UP -- Farm-raised catfish processed during September totaled 33.2 million pounds round weight, up 21 percent from a year ago. During September, 16.7 million pounds of processed fish were sold, an increase of 9 percent from September 1990. Whole fish represented 31 percent of the sales; fillets were 48 percent; and the remaining 21 percent were mostly steaks, nuggets & value added products. **Contact: Ron Sitzman** (202) 447-3244.

HORSE FACILITY AT LAREDO? USDA is proposing to approve the El Primero Equine Export Facility at the Laredo, Texas, airport as an official export facility for horses. "The El Primero facility has all the space and equipment needed to officially process horses and fully meets our standards," says **Lonnie J. King**, of USDA's Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service. **Contact: Amichai Heppner** (301) 436-5222.

FARM LABOR -- During the week of Sept. 8-14, there were 549 thousand hired workers on farms & ranches in the 11 states USDA surveyed. This compares with 658 thousand workers during the August 1991 survey week. There was no comparable survey done in September 1990. The 11 states surveyed include: New York, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Florida, Michigan, Wisconsin, Texas, New Mexico, Oregon, Washington & California. Average September wage rates hired workers received in the 11 states ranged from \$4.84 per hour in Wisconsin to \$6.40 per hour in Washington. **Contact: Tom Kurtz** (202) 475-3228.

USDA SCIENTISTS SEEKING ORANGE TOMATO -- USDA scientist **John R. Stommel** is working to breed a super-high vitamin A tomato which is likely to be as orange as a carrot. "Large accumulation of beta carotene, which the body converts to vitamin A, usually show up as orange coloring," Stommel says. Health conscious consumers seek out both well-known orange vegetables -- carrots & sweet potatoes -- because they are high in vitamin A. The new orange tomato could have about half the vitamin A of the average carrot and could easily be in the same range of vitamin A content as sweet potatoes, ounce for ounce, Stommel says. **Contact: John R. Stommel** (301) 344-3380.

Editor: Marci Hilt Phone: (202) 720-6445

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1794 -- On this edition of **Agriculture USA**, **Brenda Curtis** takes a look at the new school lunch program, which offers more variety & foods lower in fat, sugar & salt. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1276 -- Future shop; new uses for old crops; wild animals on the prowl; antibodies over easy; hidden hunger. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1784 -- USDA News Highlights; Secretary of Agriculture **Edward Madigan** comments on Soviet trip; beef expansion may be on the way; dairy outlook; farm program reminders. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1443 -- Eco-friendly fly control; roach-killing wasps; fish oils & malaria; "natural" soybean oil; low-linolenic acid soybeans. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Tues., Nov. 5, crop/weather update; Tues., Nov. 12, U.S. crop production; Wed., Nov. 13, farm labor, world ag/grain situation, world cotton situation, world oilseed situation; Thurs., Nov. 14, livestock/poultry situation; Fri., Nov. 15, fruit/nut outlook, milk production. **(These are the USDA reports we know about in advance. Our Newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling.)**

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

FEATURES -- **Pat O'Leary** reports on Iowa's "Living History" farms; **DeBoria Janifer** reports on women smokers & osteoporosis; **Gary Beaumont** of the University of Illinois on biotechnology & soybeans.

ACTUALITIES -- USDA economist **Barbara Claffey** with a new ag outlook; USDA meteorologist **Norton Strommen** with a crop & weather update; USDA economist **Stan Daberkow** on ag resources; USDA economist **Sara Short** on the dairy situation & outlook.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- **Lynn Wyvill** reports on year-round turkey consumption; **Pat O'Leary** reports on U.S. high-value exports; **DeBoria Janifer** on new & improved school lunches; **Dave Carter** has a five-part series on grocery stores; **John Snyder** on farmland preservation & community-sponsored ag.

EVERY OTHER WEEK -- **Agriculture Update**, five minutes of USDA farm program information in "news desk" format with B-roll.

Available on Satellite Westar 4, Transponder 12D (Channel 23), audio 6.2 or 6.8:

Thursdays from 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EDT, **Saturdays** from 10 - 10:45 a.m., EDT, and **Mondays** from 8 - 8:45 a.m., EDT. **(DON'T FORGET -- Westar 4 will be replaced by Galaxy 6 Nov. 2.)**

OFFMIKE

SMOKE FROM WESTERN FIRES...has arrived in Nebraska, says **Bruce Gaarder** (KNEB, Scottsbluff), giving the air a smokey aroma. While it is dry in his area no fires have been reported. Big issue Bruce is covering is the state tax on personal property to go into effect Jan. 1. State supreme court overturned an exemption on inventory. Bruce says there is a possibility for legislative action, but the issue is complicated by need for revenue. Ag & business communities are against the tax.

RECENT PROGRAM...produced by **Patrick Driscoll** (Michigan Farm Radio Net, Lansing) featured the state's new governor, **John Engler**, who spoke about Michigan's international marketing effort. Patrick says the governor is ag oriented & a former FFA state officer.

YIELDS...were better than expected considering the lateness in planting, says **Hal Hanna** (KXEL, Waterloo, Iowa). Good weather speeded the harvest, most of it in the bins before first frost.

Farm Broadcasters Letter



Office of Public Affairs
Radio-TV Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250-1300

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PROPER APPLICATION...of anhydrous ammonia has been covered by **Charlie Kampa** (KBRF, Fergus Falls, Minn.). Some producers had been concerned that application was drying the fields. Charlie reports that when it is done correctly bacteria in the top of the soil profile is replenished in 48 hours.

MOVED...**Howard Hale** (KNEB, Scottsbluff, Neb.) to KSTF-TV, Scottsbluff. **Paul Weyrens** KBRF, Fergus Falls, Minn., to the Soil Conservation Service in Fergus Falls.

PEARL HARBOR IDEA...**Bob Cockrum** (Texas Agri-Business Network, Dallas), says that in honor of the upcoming 50th anniversary of Pearl Harbor, the network is offering a one-hour tape of news broadcast Dec. 7-9, 1941, for those responding to a listener postcard survey. Response is much larger than last year's incentive program, Bob says.

VIC POWELL
Chief, Radio & TV Division